

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

REGION: Rocky Mountain PARK/AREA NAME: Glacier National Park PARK NUMBER: 1430

STRUCTURE NAME: Scalplock Mountain Fire Lookout STRUCTURE NUMBER: 629

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE: Scalplock Mountain; accessible QUADRANGLE NAME: Essex, MT (1964)
by trail connecting to Boundary Trail near Walton Ranger Station

Zone Easting Northing

QUADRANGLE SCALE: 7.5-minute

UTM: 12 309165 5352655

CLASSIFICATION:

NUMBER OF RESOURCES:

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:	CATEGORY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> District	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Objects
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/private & public	<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	TOTAL

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The Scalplock Mountain fire lookout is a two-story, square (14x14'), frame building with a rolled asphalt pyramidal hip roof and 1'x10" lapboard siding. The structure is set on a rubblestone and concrete pad foundation. The lower level is solid with a single board-and-batten entry. The upper level is reached by a 2x8" plank stairway. Double pane windows and a catwalk wrap around four sides of the upper level. The structure is in good condition. This lookout is a standard, wood frame, 14x14-ft. house set on a 10-ft. tower with catwalk. The basic plan, originally designed by the United States Forest Service, was often modified and revised by both Forest and Park Service engineers. The Scalplock Mountain lookout has good integrity of materials, design, and workmanship and is significant in the architectural history of Glacier National Park.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1931

Glacier National Park Superintendent E.T. Scoyen recommended Scalplock Mountain as a prime lookout site in 1931 because it afforded views into "90 percent of Park Creek Valley and a large unseen area in the Middle Fork [of the Flathead River] valley ... traversed by the Roosevelt Highway and the Great Northern Railway." It was an accepted fact that many fires originated from careless people in passing cars and trains. The ability to view the entire travel corridor that forms the southwest boundary of the park became an administrative mandate. Lookouts at Loneman, Scalplock, and Elk Mountains (in the Flathead National Forest) answered that need.¹ This fire lookout is one of several similar buildings constructed in Glacier National Park between the late 1920s and the early 1940s to protect park lands from the always critical threat of fire. A planned network of lookouts within the Park and on adjoining national forest lands allowed reciprocal surveillance of both areas. The series of lookouts in Glacier succeeded for many years in reducing the number of disastrous fires in the park. Today, air observation allows a more comprehensive coverage of the park and has replaced the manned lookout almost entirely. The Scalplock Mountain lookout is significant because it illustrates an important aspect in the management and conservation of timber resources in Glacier National Park.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Scalplock Mountain fire lookout is a significant resource both architecturally and historically. It meets the eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria a and c.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE:

¹E.T. Scoyen to the Director, National Park Service, March 18, 1931, "Glacier: Lands, Buildings, Roads and Trails; Lookout Stations," File: 620-037, Part One From July 1929 to November 1945, Glacier National Park, National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives, Washington, DC.

FORM PREPARED BY:

DATE: June 1984

NAME/TITLE:

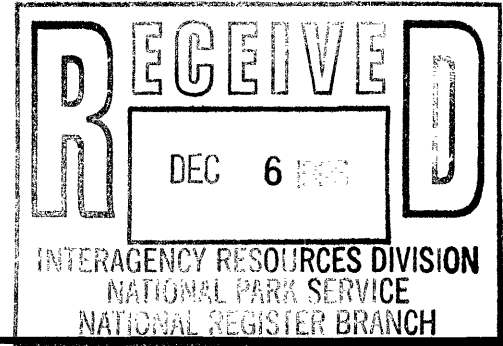
ORGANIZATION: Historical Research Associates, P.O. Box 7086, Missoula, MT 59807-7086

86000363

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

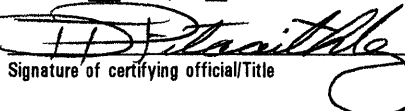
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Scalplock Lookout (addendum), Flathead County, MT.



3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

12.5.95
Date

National Park Service

State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.


Signature of commenting or other official

SEP 29 1995
Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

 entered in the National Register
 see continuation sheet

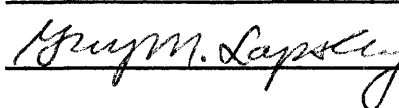
 determined eligible for the National Register
 see continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register
 see continuation sheet

 removed from the National Register
 see continuation sheet

☒ other (explain)

Additional Documentation Accepted



1/19/96

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Building Interior

The Scalplock Lookout is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Additional documentation is provided below for the purpose of describing and evaluating the interior for integrity and significance.

7. Narrative Description

Summary

Fire lookouts were generally constructed from standardized building packages, packed to the lookout site for assembly. Most were also constructed following the mid-1920s increase in lookout-construction appropriations and prior to the 1930s advent of aerial fire detection and suppression. This use of standard plans and the short construction period resulted in a remarkable degree of uniformity in interior design, not only in park lookouts but also in contemporaneous lookouts built on the forests of the USFS Northern Region. Paneled or vertical-plank doors (like the windows, paired with full-length "storms") provided access. In a classic case of design following function, large multi-light awning windows dominated all four elevations; painted 2" to 4" tongue-and-groove planks covered the small expanse of exposed interior wall. Floors were generally finished with painted 3-inch to 6-inch softwood. Fixed furnishings included the critical and centrally located fire finders, a wood-burning stove, a small cot, a wood table and chair(s), and wall-mounted cupboards located above the window banks, near the ceilings. Ceilings were either open/exposed truss or, if dropped, finished with painted tongue-and-groove planks and containing a hinged door leading to the "attic" storage space. Food and equipment storage areas in the "basement" were unfinished and accessed by vertical-board or paneled wood doors.

Scalplock Lookout (#629), 1931

As befits its function, pairs of large two-light windows dominate the interior of this small building. Three-inch floorboards, painted grey and paired with narrow 1" quarter-round baseboards, cover the floors. The same 3" planks (either shiplap or tongue-and-groove), laid horizontally, cover the walls and ceiling. Plywood "shutters" are centered above each central window; held in place by swivel latches these remove to reveal screened vents. Each corner, above the windows, has been fitted with a corner shelf. A trap door, also constructed of 3" planks, provides access to the attic storage space. Two-inch boards, painted white, frame all windows and the three-panel/one-light exterior door.

Fixed furnishings include two white tables and two white chairs; a bedframe; mattresses; modern propane refrigerator; four cabinets constructed of the same 3" tongue-and-groove planks used on the walls, ceiling, and floors; a solar powered radio; and the centrally located Osborne fire finder, mounted on a grey metal stand.

The basement storage area, created by the elevated construction of the primary component and accessed through a board-and-batten door, is unfinished, with dirt floors and exposed frame walls and ceiling. Open shelves and the floor space are littered with tools, propane tanks, and miscellaneous equipment.

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8. Statement of Significance

The interior is unmodified and contributes to the building's significance.

Photographs

- 1) Photographer: Jason Wilmot
2) Date of Photographs: September 1993
3) Location of Negatives: National Park Service, RMR-RC, Denver, CO.

PHOTO NUMBER	BUILDING NAME AND NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
1	Scalplock Lookout (#629)	Interior-detail of cabinet unit
2	Scalplock Lookout (#629)	Interior